LETTER

TO

SIR HENRY PARNELL, BART. M.P.

ON THE

New Colonial Trade Bill.

BY

HENRY BLISS, ESQ.

LONDON.—1831.

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LONDON:
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TO

SIR HENRY PARNELL, BART. M.P.

SIR,

As you were the leader of the opposition to the new Bill, brought forward by the late Administration, for regulating the West India intercourse, and as your sentiments are known to be strongly opposed to the colonial system in general, I address particularly to you the observations, which are also offered to the attention of all who favour your opinions. This liberty needs no apology, and shall be used without phrases of compliment or any personality; except only to remind you, that it is not enough for Legislators thoroughly to understand a subject, unless also they convince those, whose interests are affected, that the whole case in all its bearings has been carefully studied, and decided upon its merits, without sacrifice to any

39881

favourite theory in economy or party in politics. The evidences of such study and decision, on the part of some of the opponents of the late Bill, still appear exceedingly scanty. On the part of others, a partial change of policy indicates that some such investigation has been made, and encourages the hope, that further information and reflection may produce a more entire conversion in them, and bring the rest round to a similar conclusion.

The ground upon which the Bill and Schedule, introduced by Mr. Herries, were opposed, seems to be, that although duties upon many articles are to be entirely repealed, and importation made free and unrestricted, yet the addition proposed on other articles, however few in number and small in amount, is considered as receding from the principle of the Act in 1825, and the policy of the ministers who framed it, and as no less contrary to sound maxims of trade and the general interests of the British empire.

The object of the present Letter is not to contrast the Bill and Schedule of Mr. Herries, with those submitted to Parliament by the present Administration. The principles of both measures are identical. The difference in some details would probably have disappeared upon the modification of the former

during its progress through the House. But there is one respect in which they differ most essentially. The previous bill was permanent or of indefinite duration; the present is limited, as to any beneficial operation, to the 1st of January, 1834, after which it proposes a gradual but most injurious withdrawing of that protection, which, till then, it acknowledges to be just and necessary.

The first general principle in the Colonial system of Great Britain has hitherto been a mutual preference of all her provinces in their intercourse with each other and with the mother country. This has been the basis of that confederacy, the security of that connection, which has held together for so many years her immense dominions, in spite of all the differences and divisions, of situation, laws, language, and religion. This has proved the main support of the power and wealth and independence of the whole empire; of which assertions no better illustration can be given or desired, than is found in the history of the present question of West India intercourse, and of the controversy it has occasioned with the United States.

It never was the intention either of Mr. Huskisson, or of any former administration, to withhold an adequate protection to the in-

tercolonial trade between the northern and southern provinces in America. The principle of excluding foreign productions was reluctantly given up in 1786, and upon urgent necessity alone; the exclusion of foreign shipping was never legally abandoned till 1822. The latter principle, after having been partially resumed, is now again conceded; but at no time, and under no circumstances, has the imperial government ever conceived, or proposed, the intention of placing the northern colonies on the same footing as foreign countries in the West India trade.

So fully has this basis of our colonial policy been understood, as well by the United States as by Great Britain, that the former never ceased to attack it, and the latter to defend. Nor were the attacks of the Americans founded upon any abstract affection for free trade, which they never applied to their own territories; but because in this contest, as a commercial question, they had nothing to lose, and everything to gain; and far more as a political question, because they have ever been seeking to destroy the connection between the northern and southern colonies, and between both and the mother country; and by making the commerce of each of these divisions of the British empire with the United States of more importance than

the commerce of each with the other, the connection of the whole together would be most effectually weakened, and ready in any future conflict to be dissolved. And fortunately for the United States the commerce between them and Great Britain has already, for some time, been of greater amount than that between Great Britain and either her northern or southern colonies separately; (nor is there another circumstance to which the Americans are believed to have been more indebted for all their successful attempts in persuading our government into their demands); still, as the trade between Great Britain and the northern and southern colonies together, is of greater amount than her trade with the United States, and as the whole collective sum of the mutual exchange among the three divisions of the empire with each other is greater by nearly 200 per cent., it became the more necessary, and the more desirable, for the United States to spare no means for intercepting and destroying this intercourse and connection. Finding themselves, therefore, situated nearer to Great Britain than the southern colonies, about as near as the northern, and far nearer to both these two than Great Britain to them, or they to each other; and finding themselves also capable of producing every article exchanged between

the whole together, and already in fact producing all such articles, and even producing some of the most important at a cheaper rate; it was obvious that they had only to establish for their policy, and to impose upon Great Britain, this principle, that their productions should be admitted into her colonies on the same terms as productions from any British possessions, and admitted into Great Britain on the same terms as from her own colonies. The latter part of which proposition is yet abiding till time and circumstances shall develope an opportunity; but the former seemed ripe for presenting in 1823, has never since been out of sight, and was never before so near being accomplished as now, when professed to be abandoned. At first, it was smuggled into an Act of Congress under the equivocation of "*elsewhere;*" and being detected, and that word explained to apply to British possessions as well as foreign countries, the claim was boldly avowed, and a bold and desperate push made to obtain its acknowledgment. It should be repeated, and never forgotten, that those, the American demands, were neither founded upon the desire, nor consistent with the principle, of free trade; for they not only constantly refused to apply the same rule to themselves, and admit British and colonial produc-

tions on equal terms with their own, but they immediately so increased the duties upon both, as to become, in the most important articles of the latter, little short of a total prohibition. How their claim was met by our government, with what spirit and indignation exposed and disdained, and with what decision and rigour retaliated, is well known and universally applauded; and need be mentioned here only to show how strongly the able ministers who then advised his Majesty, Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson, were convinced of the policy of giving the British colonies, in their trade with each other, an adequate protection, and to what extremities they were resolved to maintain it. For not only do they appear to have considered all negotiation as terminated by the very mention of such a pretension, but finding it insisted upon by the American government, they hesitated not to immediately interdict all communication between the West Indies and the United States, by closing the ports in these colonies against American shipping. It is clear, therefore, that the principle upon which Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson, and the administration of that period, acted, was that of protection to British and colonial trade in the British colonial ports; it is clear that the whole question, the whole dispute, between the two go-

vernments has been, whether such a protection should be afforded; and it was upon the principle, and for the purpose, of affording such protection, that the Acts of 4 Geo. IV. c. 44, (in 1822,) and 6 Geo. IV. c. 114, (1825,) were passed.

But it is not from these circumstances only that such a conclusion may be deduced; there is internal evidence in the Acts themselves, no less strong than the extrinsic, that they were founded upon this basis, and adapted particularly to this object.

In the first place, the power exercised by the Imperial Parliament being solely for the regulation of trade, the only legitimate scope of such acts must be, either to afford protection, or to take it away; that is, either to impose a duty which shall give British productions a preference, or to impose none; because any lesser duty which should come short of this object, would not be for the regulation of trade, but for the purpose of revenue, or for no purpose whatever. That to take away all such protection was not the object of the former Acts is evident, because the Acts of 1822 admit no article duty free, and the Act of 1825 but very few, and those unimportant. Next, the Schedules themselves of these Acts, and particularly that of 1825, in strict accordance with

this principle of regulating trade, that is, of protecting British production, adopt for this end three means or measures, viz. prohibitions, specific duties, and duties ad valorem. That prohibitions were designed for protection, there can be little doubt. As little can be felt with regard to the duties ad valorem, they being on some articles as high as thirty per cent., twenty on others, and fifteen on all the rest, except a certain class of articles, which are either never demanded in the Colonies, as alabaster, medals, diamonds, &c. or but to a trifling amount, as essences, drugs, ostrich feathers, &c. or are produced most cheaply by the Colonies themselves, as hemp, bar and pig iron. On this class of articles, none of which could interfere with any British industry, or interfere to a very small degree, and, consequently, required the very lowest degree of protection, that lowest degree of protection is enacted to be seven and a half per cent. Now, since the specific duties are found in such company, and are fixed upon articles requiring far more protection, (because produced far from their market, and farther much than the foreign competitor,) and since these articles are the most important, (because their value is great, and their bulk such as to employ, perhaps, 150,000 tons of shipping, and because they are almost the only articles the North

American Colonies can produce,) it follows, that it could never have been the design of the Act, nor the intention of those who carried it, to give a less protection to these articles charged with specific duties, than to those charged ad valorem; and it is even probable that it was intended to give more.

Such was the principle of that Act and Schedule, and such the means by which its end was to be attained: if, therefore, it can be shown that these means proved in any case inadequate to the end, the necessity of reinforcing them by some further measure will be established; and upon such further measure also, upon the policy of changing the duties as experience or better information proved them to be inefficient for protection, example may be likewise found, in the subsequent Acts of the same administration, or the same ministers. For in the year following, in 1826, the warehousing system was made more effectual, by reducing duties on foreign articles through the Northern Colonies, to protect the British carrier; and in 1827, the duty on silk and cotton manufactures having proved unequal to protect British production, the latter was raised thirty per cent. from fifteen per cent. ad valorem to twenty, and the former from fifteen to thirty, being an increase of cent. per cent. Yet, in

the case of duties ad valorem, it was much easier to have ascertained at first what amount would be a sufficient protection, than in the case of specific duties, which have to be compared with their amount in value, in order to judge how far they protect production, and with their amount in bulk per ton, to see how far they encourage navigation; and as those duties are laid upon the articles of the greatest bulk, their peculiar object apparently was the protection of navigation; for navigation is the main advantage of this trade, and can be protected only by specific duties. But to ascertain how these duties operated, longer time was necessary, to make inquiries, to receive returns, to collect facts, and to compare results, and see where and why they were less adequate, and by what change they might be made to answer the object for which they were designed. This degree of experience has now been acquired. The experiment having been tried during the 1823, 1824, and 1825, the official returns of the last of those years show us how far the specific duties have proved effective, and where they require addition. The importation of such articles into the Southern Colonies from the Northern, and from foreign parts, during that year, is given in the following table, and to show that it was purely from want of an efficient pro-

tection that these results were such, the importation from the Northern Colonies of the year 1828, when the Americans were excluded, is also added.—

Articles.	From Foreign Ports, 1825.	From the North American Colonies, 1825.	From the North American Colonies, 1828.
Flour of all kinds. *Barrels*	183,058	4,282	36,766
Boards, M. ft.	12,671	8,061	18,739
Shingles, M.	11,035	4,412	11,558
Staves, M.	7,855	1,451	6,942

Such has been the result of that experiment; and by comparing the rate of these specific duties with their amount ad valorem upon these articles, and also with their amount upon the bulk per ton, the causes of that result may be ascertained.

Articles.	Rate of Duty by Act of 1825.	Amount ad valorem.			Amount per Ton.	
		Average Value.		Duty.	Bulk.	Duty.
		£.	s.			
Flour ..	5*s.* per Barrel.	2	0	12½ per Cent.	5 Barrels to 1 Ton.	25*s.* per Ton.
Boards ..	21*s.* per M.	P.P. 11	11			
		W.P. 7	7	11 per Cent.	320 ft. per Ton.	7*s.* per Ton.
		Average 9	9			
Shingles	7*s.* and 14*s.* average 10*s.* 6*d.* per M.	3	0	17 per Cent.	2 M. per Ton.	21*s.* per Ton.
Staves ..	15*s.* & 12*s.* 6*d.* average 14*s.* 3*d.* per M.	12	0	6 per Cent.	400 per Ton.	4*s.* 9*d.* per Ton.

The amount ad valorem of the specific duty at the highest is but 17 per cent., and that is upon an article of less importance; upon flour it is 12½ per cent.; upon boards it is but 11 per cent.; upon staves 6 per cent.; though we have seen the Schedule of 1825 had established 7½ per cent. as the minimum of protection, even upon articles interfering least with British production, and had established upon all other articles the rate of 15, 20 and 30 per cent.

As therefore the duty upon cotton and silk manufactures, having been found inefficient at 15, has, since the Act of 1825, been raised to 20 and 30 per cent.; so should the duties, which have proved far more inadequate, upon flour, boards and staves, articles more in need of protection, be on the same principle raised from 12½, and 10, and 6 per cent, to something nearer an effectual amount, or nearer to an equality with other articles; lest a great partiality, or an unreasonable distinction, should appear in the law, if indeed manufactures from Great Britain of glass, cotton, and some others, are to be protected by a duty of 20 per cent.; and the manufactures of silk, linen, paper and leather, by a duty of 30 per cent; while the wood and corn of the North American Colonies are grudged the encouragement of more than

6 or 12 per cent., though these articles are almost their sole dependence, and though their foreign competitor lies between them and their market.

Next, let the same duties be compared with the amount they are equal to per ton. For the real object of competition between us and the Americans is one of navigation, as, if authority were wanting, the letters of Mr. M'Lean have confessed; and the great disadvantage of the Northern Colonies is, that, besides the difficulty of producing as cheaply as the Americans, which is barely to be effected, and in few instances only, those provinces lie so much further from the West Indies, that the average difference of freight is from 10 to 15 shillings a ton in favour of the Americans. To determine the efficiency of any duty, therefore, it is not enough to consider whether its amount ad valorem is sufficient to encourage production, it is necessary to view it in respect of bulk and transportation, whether, when produced, the article can be carried to market: for the ordinary advantage of having the market nearer the home producer than the foreign competitor, and of adding the whole freight to the duty of protection, is here not only wanting, but is actually inverted. It will be seen, on

reference to the table last preceding, that in point of freight, though the duties amount to a protection on flour and shingles, yet on boards and staves, two articles required to the amount perhaps of 100,000 tons of shipping, the duty is not more than equal to half the difference of freight in favour of the Americans by the shorter voyage. That is, the law which admits American wood and shipping at that duty gives them in fact a preference equal to the whole amount of the apparent protection it holds out to the Northern Colonists. Such duties may be very well for the purpose of raising a revenue, but they can hardly be called duties for the regulation of trade; at least upon such regulations it is evidently impossible for the North American Colonies to compete.

There is yet another view to be taken of this question, which will also shew that these duties are not only inadequate to the object of the law and irreconcilable with its principle, but totally at variance with fair and impartial dealing between the Northern and Southern Colonies. For the specific duties laid to protect the produce of the Southern Colonies in the ports of the Northern are, compared with their amount ad valorem, as follows:

Articles.	Rate of Duty.	Value.	Amount of Duty Ad valorem.
Sugar . . .	5*s.* per cwt.	27*s.*	18½ per cent.
Molasses . .	3*s.* per cwt. 4½*d.* per gallon.	1*s.* 1*d.*	34
Coffee . . .	5*s.* per cwt.	60*s.*	8
Rum . . .	6*d.* per gallon.	2*s.*	25
Other Spirits .	1*s.* do.	3*s.*	33

Thus while the Northern Colonies find in the ports of the Southern a protection on corn and wood, never above 17, and on a principal article as low as 6 per cent., the Southern Colonies enjoy in the ports of the Northern a protection, (excepting upon one, not the most important article,) of 18, 25, 33, and 34 per cent., though they have no foreign competitor to meet in the Northern markets. Let it not be supposed that such comparisons with the protection reserved to the manufactures of the mother country, and to the produce of the West Indies, are made for the purpose of odium or complaint: the only object is to show, that the duties on corn and wood have been measured by such a scale as has unwittingly produced a departure from the principle of the Act of 1825, and has

frustrated its intention; and that the addition proposed to be made by the new Schedule is perfectly consistent with the policy of the Act, attains the same end, by slightly reinforcing the means, and completes that uniformity and impartiality of protection, which were undoubtedly the objects contemplated.

Though the American government never had the right, and is now understood to have relinquished the pretension of interfering with these duties; and though informed, before the opening of the ports, that the duties would be raised and regulated according to the convenience of British interests, without reference to those of other countries; yet as the minister of that country is now protesting against the alterations by the new Act and Schedule, it is well to consider the amount ad valorem of the specific duties levied by the United States on West India produce. By the Tariff of 1828, those duties were as follows:

Articles.	Rate of Duty.	Value.	Amount Ad valorem.
Sugar . . .	3 cents per lb. about 15*s.* per cwt.	27*s.*	56 per cent.
Molasses . .	10 cents. per gallon, 6*d.*	1*s.* 1*d.*	46
Coffee . . .	5 cents per lb. 25*s.* per cwt.	60*s.*	41
Salt . . .			200
Rum . . .	53 to 85 cents per gall. say 3*s.* 8*d.*	2*s.*	187

The American minister is therefore complaining of duties on their corn and wood in no case exceeding 17 per cent., while the duties levied on colonial produce in the United States, are in no case less than 40, and on the principal article exceed 180 per cent.

Before the order in council for opening the colonial trade had been issued a month, so little difficulty does the American government feel apparently, in complaining of the very terms on which they desired and importuned to be admitted, that they have now alleged the importation of articles into the West Indies, duty free, *from* the Northern Colonies, without inquiring into the origin, to be unfair, and new, and contrary

to the recent understanding. That this measure is nothing new, nor contrary to the recent arrangement, may be shown by the dates of the Acts of Parliament introducing it, long subsequently to which are these repeated applications made by the American government; that there is nothing unfair in admitting articles to be warehoused duty free, may be proved, if proof be necessary, by the example of the American as well as of many other governments. But upon what terms articles from warehouses in one part of the British dominions are to be admitted into any other parts of the British dominions, is no longer a question of foreign arrangement, but of internal regulation, with which no independent nation can suffer another to interfere. Do the United States inquire, at New Orleans or New York, on which side of the lakes the flour, wood, and furs, they receive, originate? Duties, indeed, upon their first importation across their boundary, they may or may not impose, according to their own convenience; but upon transportation from one part of their territories to another, whether from Lake Erie to New York, by rivers and canals, or from the St. Croix to the Missisippi, by sea, they have never thought of inquiring on which side of Lake Erie, or on which side the St. Croix, the article was produced. It is

not to be believed that this country will ever submit on such questions, to hear of foreign interference; this would be not more injurious to colonial interests, than to the interests and the sovereignty of the United Kingdom; this would be calling upon Great Britain not only to relinquish her colonies, but to renounce her independence.

Since the admission of American vessels was conceded, the only question, the whole dispute between the two countries, has merely been whether Great Britain should or should not admit American productions into the West Indies on the same terms as productions from her other colonies, or from the United Kingdom. And this question, so long and vigorously contested, the Americans are now on the point of obtaining, at the very moment they appear to have abandoned it; and while Great Britain imagines that the United States have complied with all her terms, it is in fact she herself that has complied, or is about to comply, with theirs: because the difference between admitting American productions on the same terms as British, which is what they demanded, and admitting them on duties which are utterly inefficient to protect British, which is what is now about to be granted, is nothing. The Schedule of 1825, in making the discrimination

between Colonial and American wood unequal to the difference of the voyage, makes in fact no discrimination. The American government should have known this in 1826; they were told of it by the best informed of their own country, and it was principally because they failed to comprehend and secure this that the Adam's party and administration was thrown out of office. The time since elapsed and the returns collected have made this fact better understood, and therefore it is that they have since been so importunate to retrace their steps and accept of the terms before offered; having ascertained that though these terms were intended to be most contrary to their own, they are in effect most consistent and identical.

To the second class of objections, derived from the principles of free trade, the answer must be limited to a bare summary of reasons. The present is neither the moment for discussing, nor the occasion for applying, a theory opposed to the opinions of most countries, and as yet unapproved by the experience of any. However sound may be that doctrine, the United States will have none of it. They created their marine by the old system; they are creating, they have created, their manufactures by the old system; they have created distilleries and plantations sufficient for their

supply of sugar and spirits by the old system of protection, which they are therefore too wise, or too foolish, to abandon. The British Colonies are strongly imbued with the same prejudice, and for the same causes. By the old system, they have been enabled to exchange their wood, corn and fish, for the manufactures of Great Britain and the produce of the West Indies: by the old system, therefore, a country, which would otherwise have been uninhabited or stunted in poverty and want, has rapidly grown up into all the comforts and conveniences of life, and now teems with the industry and happiness of 1,000,000 of British subjects. The Northern Colonies, and the Southern also, cleave, as to the very character of their existence, to the old system of protection; and though Great Britain (having here perhaps no better reason to preserve it, than that thereby the mutual trade and returns between her colonies and herself exceeds in the aggregate £17,000,000 yearly, and the navigation employed is nearly 700,000 tons,) seems now disposed to forsake the old system of protection, and adopt the new and contrary doctrine of free trade—why will she insist upon making the beginning, upon trying the first experiment, and to the extremest extent, in that quarter where opinions and interests and

circumstances are most opposed to it? For what purpose? To supply the West Indies?—They were never so abundantly supplied as now. To supply them cheaper?—Their supplies were never before so cheap. To make them cheaper still, by taking off all duties and buying of the nearest producer?—The duties are paid to the Colonial Treasuries, which must be supplied from some quarter, and none is less inconvenient; and the nearer of two producers is not likely to sell the cheaper, when the more remote has withdrawn from the trade; and if by taxing one source of supply you introduce the competition of another, and those taxes are paid to yourselves, you can be no great loser. But a new market will be opened for the West Indies in the United States?—A better market will be lost in the Northern Colonies, where the West Indies sell more under the restricted trade than they sold to both the Northern Colonies and the United States together, during the open trade of 1825. We may have half the carrying trade of West India supplies from the United States?—For which we give up the certainty of having in time the whole, and already, one half from the Northern Colonies. The Americans, for reasons too long to state, must always have three-fourths of the naviga-

tion employed in carrying their own exports. They have now about that proportion in the intercourse with the United Kingdom. What one advantage therefore in trade or navigation is to result from this experiment?

For the disadvantages that are sure to follow, it ought not to be necessary to repeat, what is worthy of being ever in mind—that the trade from the Northern Colonies has increased from 36,000 tons, in 1825, to 90,000, in 1828, exceeded 100,000 in 1830, and may be carried, perhaps, to double that amount; that their exports and imports increased during that period in the same proportion, and would undoubtedly have continued to increase under adequate protection, as they will now more rapidly decline if protection be withheld.

One of the most singular features in the whole business is, for the sake of how small a sum, how paltry an amount, all these interests are to be compromised. The whole foreign importations of wood and corn in 1825, when the trade was last open, and the whole amount of the duties to be levied upon them according to the new Schedule, were the following:—

Articles.	Quantity.	Duty.	Amount.
Flour and Meal . of which	183,058 brls.		
take Wheat at .	100,000 brls.	5*s.*	£25,000
Pitch Pine Boards	4,000 M. ft.	21*s.*	4,200
Other Boards .	9,000 M. ft.	28*s.*	12,600
Shingles . . .	11,000 M.	10*s.* 6*d.*	5,775
Staves . . .	7,856 M.	26*s.*	10,216
			£57,791

For £57,791, the whole of which is revenue to the West Indians, a trade is to be compromised, of which the articles exchanged cannot be less than £1,000,000 yearly, and the navigation employed is 100,000 tons.

It may be insisted that the West Indians effectively pay the same duties upon all their supplies whencesoever imported, since those from the Northern Colonies and the United Kingdom are sold for the same rate as the American. If this be the fact, what is its value to the question? Compute the same duty upon the whole supplies imported in 1825, from all parts, British and Foreign:

Articles.	Quantity.	Duty.	Amount.
Flour	202,737 brls.		
say Wheat . .	120,000 brls.	5*s.*	£30,000
Pitch Pine Boards	4,000 M.	21*s.*	4,200
Other Boards .	16,700 M.	28*s.*	23,380
Shingles . . .	15,448 M.	10*s.* 6*d.*	8,110
Staves . . .	9,839 M.	26*s.*	12,790
			£78,480

As this fact, therefore, is of so little value, it seems hardly worth while to contest it. Yet it is no less erroneous than unimportant; for if the price at which one competitor (the Americans) can sell, regulates the price at which the other (the Northern Colonies) will sell, and therefore whatever duty is imposed upon the sales of one goes into the pockets of the other; it seems equally true, that the price at which the Northern Colonies can sell, regulates the price at which the Americans will sell, and that whatever duty is taken off of the latter, goes likewise into the pockets of the Americans. The fallacy lies in considering the Colonies and the Americans as two individual companies, whereas in truth the competion is so great, among the producers and carriers on both sides,

that all are obliged to sell for the smallest profit, while the trade is so protected as to bring both to the market; but if by a free admission of the Americans the Northern Colonists withdraw from the trade, (as they will,) then the Americans will, on frequent occasions, have a monopoly and sell at exorbitant profits. Because, in that case, the depôts at the neutral islands will cease, and the Americans will go from colony to colony, and look for a market, and take advantage of the distress or scarcity of each, and the price in the dearest will be the price in all the islands: but till now, American produce has lain accumulated at the neutral islands, and the West Indians being always certain of procuring it from thence, the price in all the islands has been the price in the cheapest and in a glutted market, with the addition indeed of a short freight, which addition, however, is not equal to the advantage of a certain supply and a glutted market, coupled with the other and greater advantages of inducing the Northern Colonies to bring down the same supplies, and barter them for rum and sugar.

Of this the West Indians are so convinced, that no remonstrance, it is believed, no petition for the proposed alteration has come home from any of their legislatures; though their complaints on former occasions, and in other

respects, prove that they are not slow to make their grievances known to the Imperial Government; nor does any opinion appear to exist among them, that whatever may be their embarassments, such is to be a remedy. The Northern Colonies, on the other hand, are so conscious how much their whole prosperity and the property, the industry and comfort of every individual, depend upon a protected trade with the West Indies, that the most earnest petitions have been sent home from every one of their legislatures, offering the prayers of 1,000,000 of loyal and industrious subjects against the re-admission of American shipping, under the inefficient Schedule of 1825.

If, however, contrary to these feelings and interests and circumstances, there still appear such a paramount advantage in the abstract theory of free trade, that the re-admission of American vessels is not enough, unless the duties on their articles also be greatly reduced, a great reduction is in fact made by the new Schedule. The new Schedule on the aggregate amount of the whole duties, instead of adding any thing to the duties of 1825, has in fact reduced them 42 per cent. It has raised the charge indeed on some articles, but it has repealed it on others, and for every increase of one shilling, a decrease is made of four.

Articles.	Quantities.	By the former Schedule.		Amount by the Schedule of Mr. Herries.		Increase.	Decrease.	Amount by the Schedule of Lord Auckland.
		Rat.	Amount.	Rate.	Amount.			
ead	61,844 *cwts.*	1*s.* 6*d.*	£. 4,638	Free.	£.	£.	£. 4,638	£. ....
rn Grain	248,073 *bshls.*	7*d.*	7,235	Free.	....	....	7,235	....
our (Wheat) ..	100,000 *brls.*	5*s.*	25,000	6*s.*	30,000	5,000	....	25,000
Other	83,058	2*s.* 6*d.*	10,125	Free.	....	....	10,125	....
ice	28,103 *cwts.*	2*s.* 6*d.*	3,934	Free.	....	....	3,934	....
oards	12,671 *mil.*	21*s.*	13,304	31*s.* 6*d.*	19,956	6,652	....	16,800
ingles	11,000 *mil.*	10*s.* 6*d.*	5,793	15*s.* 6*d.*	8,300	2,507	....	5,775
aves	7,856 *mil.*	14*s.* 2*d.*	5,564	18*s.* 9*d.*	7,859	2,295	....	10,216
ive Stock, supposed Value..	£250,000	10 per Cent.	25,000	Free.	....	....	25,000	....
			£100,593		£66,115	£16,454	£50,932	£57,791

So unjust are the objections that new restrictions and new burthens are now imposed on the intercourse with the United States. If a free trade is so much wanted, here it is to be found. The whole world may be challenged to show a freer. There is no country whose whole industry has so low and scanty a protection as the Northern Colonies are by the new Schedule to have in the parts of the South; yet there is no country which, from its circumstances, requires more: there is no country which has merited more; if to have taken up this trade twice, when the Americans had twice interdicted it for the avowed purpose of

compelling Great Britain to renounce at one time her belligerent rights, at another her colonial; if to have defeated both these attempts by embarking their property and industry in this trade, besides periling their lives to defeat the similar attempt through war and conquest; if these services, commercial and defensive, and which may yet be required again, can be any merit, it is hard, it is distressing, no less to the feelings than the interests of the Northern Colonies, to see the trade, which they have, for a second time created for the supply of the West Indies, a second time taken away and given to the people who sought to starve them.

It should not be overlooked, that the expressions contained in Mr. Canning's Letter, 11th September, 1826, "that the British Government cannot consent to enter into any renewed negociations upon the intercourse, so long as the pretensions of the Act (of Congress) of 1823 remain part of the law of the United States;" and that, "after having applied the interdict to any country, the British Government cannot hold itself bound to remove the interdict as a matter of course, whenever it may happen to suit the convenience of the foreign government to re-consider its measures;" and the refusal of Lord Dudley to adjust the laws on colonial intercourse by any informal agreement previously entered into

between the two governments;" his declining all negotiation, and declaring that the resolution of his Majesty's government was founded upon considerations general in their nature and conclusive; these publications had induced the Colonies to believe, that the Order in Council of July, 1826, was to be a permanent and conclusive measure; and therefore they invested their means and capital the more largely and securely in the West India trade. And though neither that order nor those official letters seem to have been considered by his Majesty's government as any pledge of its faith, yet the encouragement given by such a declaration of its feelings and intentions has produced in those Colonies nearly the same effect; and all the interests which have thereby been created, the property implicated, contracts arranged, shipping, mills, warehouses, wharfs, canals, &c. made and in making, (which embrace much of capital and industry of the country,) all are in danger of being destroyed by the recent order in council, unless the principle of the Act of 1825 be maintained, and its provisions permanently reinforced by the new Schedule.

But if the Colonies are alone to blame for relying so far on the constancy of government, and the continuance of the former Order in Council, they will consider, and in this in-

stance it is conceived most justly, the faith of his Majesty's government to have been distinctly pledged to them, that in case of its revocation, a more efficient protection should be given to their trade by an amendment of the former Schedule.

This has not only been understood in many communications with the Office of Trade, but letters to that effect are believed to have been despatched from the Colonial Department by the November packet to all the Northern Colonies.

Such are the considerations in favour of the principle of the measure proposed by the late administration, and adopted, for a term at least, by their successors. Whatever reasons have been here offered will not be found to be limited to the year 1834, but are co-eval with the Colonial system of Great Britain, and will probably be co-extensive with the duration of her Colonial power. It has been shown that no exclusion, no monopoly, is proposed for the Northern Colonies. To be able to bring their produce to market is all they expect. The duties contended for are in no case equal to the difference of freight in their rival's favour, with the exception only of flour and shingles, on the former of which, after the 15*s.* per ton to cover that difference, there remains 2*s.* a barrel,

about five per cent. ad valorem; on the latter 1*s.* per M., about ½ per cent., to encourage production; and these are the duties of 1825, upon which no addition is now to be made. Compared with the value of commodities, this protection never exceeds, and in some instances it is far less than that which the Southern enjoy in the ports of the Northern. The protection thus given to the Southern Colonies is permanent; why should that to the Northern be not only unequal in amount, but still more unequal in duration? Or why should Parliament hamper itself with a limitation which no one can foretell may not before it expires be found and allowed inexpedient, but which in that case cannot be so easily changed, after expectations have been given to foreign powers, some of whom are already sufficiently troublesome by interfering upon less founded pretensions? The best understanding upon this question is beginning to prevail between the Northern and Southern Colonies. Some of the former, on learning that their local duties on sugar, molasses, and coffee were considered so high as to check importation, are already making great reductions, and the example will probably be followed by the whole Canadian Provinces.

The local feeling in the West Indies, though the proprietors in this country are not all aware

of its existence and reasons, is strongly in favour of encouraging the intercolonial trade. Preserve, in the present Bill, the limitation of two years and a half given to the new duties, and the decline of that trade will be less sudden indeed, but not the less certain, nor much less injurious, to the Canadas; while the West Indians will only be more embarrassed between two competitors, one of whom is withdrawing from, the other delaying to engage in, the production and carrying of their necessary supplies. Omit that limitation, and the intercolonial trade will so prosper, that in a few years no complaints shall be heard from any British colony or interest. That the American minister should, for reasons commercial and political, oppose himself to such policy, is perfectly intelligible;—that, speculating upon the disposition and information of the new ministers, he should assert to them pretensions he never hoped would be listened to by the late administration, is perhaps excusable in diplomacy at least. But what interest have Sir Henry Parnell and others in supporting the same attempts? what object to gain? what commerce, colony, shipping to serve? what end to answer, except the end of disputants in a scholastic question of economy? They constantly appeal to the Act and Schedule of 1825;

but let it be remembered that those at present proposed add nothing to the aggregate amount of the duties—that they diminish that amount by nearly one half—that upon two articles only, boards and staves, is any addition made, and when made, the whole duty will be about 19 per cent. on the former and about 13 on the latter. Does this appear too high to be permanent? It is impossible not to recognize the talent of an able minister in the measure of the late administration, which could at once make so important a reduction, and yet afford a more efficient protection to British industry, trade, and navigation.

To these facts and considerations I again invite your attention; whether successfully or not is less to me than to have endeavoured to engage it.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your very obedient
and very humble servant,

HENRY BLISS.

King's Bench Walk, Temple.
17*th March*, 1831.

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